



JAMES by the Grace of God, King
of *England, Scotland, France, and Ire-*
land, Defender of the Faith, &c.

To Our right trustie and right well
beloued Cousin and Counsellor, *Henry*,
Viscount Maandeville, Lord *Presi-*
dent of Our priue Councell; Our right trustie and
right well beloued Cousin, *William*, Earle of *Northamp-*
ton, Lord *President* of Our Councell, within the Prin-
cipalitie and Marches of *Wales*, Our right trustie and
well beloued, *Emanuel*, Lord *Scroope*, Lord *President*
of Our Councell in the North parte. To Our right
trustie and well beloued Counsellors, *Fulke*, Lord
Brooke; Sir *Iohn Suckling*, Knight, Comptroller of
Our Houshold; Sir *George Caluert*, Knight, Our prin-
cipall Secretarie; Sir *Iulius Cesar*, Knight, Master of
the Rolls. And to Our trustie and well beloued, Sir
Edward Sackuile, Knight; Sir *Humfry May*, Knight,
Chansellor of Our Duchie of *Lancaster*; Sir *Henrie*
Bellases, Knight and Baronet; Sir *Robert Cotton*, Knight
and Baronet; Sir *Nicholas Sanderson*, Knight and Ba-
ronet; Sir *Humfry Lee*, Baronet; Sir *Thomas Conentry*,
Knight, Our Atturney generall; Sir *Robert Heath*,
Knight, Our Sollicitor generall; Sir *George More*,
Knight; Sir *Walter Couert*, Knight; Sir *Henrie Wallop*,
Knight; Sir *Iohn Tracy*, Knight; Sir *Henrie Glemham*,
Knight; Sir *Richard Louelace*, Knight; Sir *Dudley*
Diggs, Knight; Sir *Iohn Brooke*, Knight; Sir *Samuel*
Sandes, Knight; Sir *William Strowde*, Knight; Sir *Iohn*
Hungerford, Knight; Sir *Philip Carie*, Knight; Sir
Henrie Marten, Knight; Sir *William Bird*, Knight; Sir
Iohn Strangwaies, Knight; Sir *Arthur Harris*,
A Knight;



Knight; Sir *George Paul*, Knight; Sir *Paul Pynder*, Knight; Sir *Richard Sutton*, Knight; Sir *Iohn Wolstenholme*, Knight; Sir *Rafe Madison*, Knight; *Heneage Finch*, Esquire, Recorder of London; *Basil Feilding*, Esquire; *Robert Hopton*, Esquire; *Edward Herbert*, Esquire; *Raphe Freeman*, *Henrie Garraway*, *William Turner*, *Anthonie Abdy*, *Thomas Monne*, *Alexander Stafford*, *William Richardson*, *George Strowde*, *Gabriel Haruey*, *Clement Harby*, and *Abraham Dawes*, Gentlemen, greeting.

WHEREAS Wee haue vnderstood by the generall complaints of Our louing Subiects, from al the parts of this Our Realme of *England*, as also by information from Our Ministers, imploied in parts beyond the Seas, that the Cloth of this Kingdome hath of late yeeres wanted that estimation and vent, in forrain parts, which formerly it had, and that the Wools of this Kingdome haue, and are fallen much from their wonted values and Trade in generall, to be so farre out of frame, that the Merchants and Clothiers of this Kingdome, are greatly discouraged. So that great numbers of people, imploied by them and depending on them, want worke, the best meanes of their liuelihood, the Land-lords faile in their Rents and Reuenues, wherewith to maintayne their ordinarie charges: and the Farmors haue not so good meanes whereby to raise their Rents, as heretofore they had, and Our selfe also find the defects thereof by the decay of Our Customes and other Duties; and generally the whole Common-wealth suffreth. So as it is high time to looke into the Cause of this great decay of Trade, and the commodities of this Our Kingdome, as also how to haue fit remedies applied for the
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restoring the same, to their former flourishing estate.

AND WHEREAS Wee, out of Our Princely care by all good meanes, to encourage Our people in their honest and industrious courses, and to aduance the welfare and wealth of Our Kingdomes and Dominions, haue often and seriously considered with Our selfe, and aduised with Our Priue Counsell, of the best meanes how to redresse the many inconueniencies which these things draw vpon Our State, for which purpose by the aduice of Our priue Counsell, We first made choice of twelue persons, to whose care We especially recommended these things by way of preparation, for after remedies to be thought of and resolved vpon; which Committee hauing spent many dayes in this important seruice, and hauing had many Conferences according to Our directions giuen vnto them, with many Knights and Gentlemen of qualitie, of diuers Counties of this Realme, with Merchants of seuerall Companies and Societies, with the Clothiers of seuerall Clothing shires, and diuers others of vnderstanding and experience; at last returned vnto Vs and Our priue Counsell, a Certificate in writing of their opinions, touching the premisses: Whereupon Wee by the aduice of Our priue Counsell, did presently by Our Royall Proclamation, enter into a way of reformation of some things, which for the present We could fitly doe. But because We found that the Matters worthy of deliberate consideration, in this so great and weightie a worke, are very many, and that the occurrents of Trade are variable, and must be directed and gouerned as Times and Occasions shall serue, or doe varie: And that it is impossible to foresee what may be the future euent of these things,

or to set downe such constant Rules for Trade, as shall not require an addition or alteration vpon iust Reasons and Grounds. W^hE haue therefore by the like aduice of Our priuie Counsell, thought fit and resolved to haue a standing Commission for these Causes, and to make choice of a conuenient number of persons of qualitie, vnderstanding experience and iudgement, to bee Our Commissioners, to whose iudgement, industrie, and care, We might commit the further searching out and better discerning of the true causes of the decay of Trade, and the finding out of fit and conuenient remedies to be applied for the same, and that after they shall haue with mature deliberation, prepared the same, they might from time to time certifie Vs, and the body of Our priuie Counsell, of their opinions, to the end that thereupon Wee might giue such order for remedies herein, as may be for Our owne Honor and the wealth and prosperitie of Our people. KNOW YE^e THEREFORE, That Wee reposing great trust and confidence in your wisdomes, integrities, and good discretions, Haue authorised and appointed; And by these Presents doe authorise and appoint you to bee Our Commissioners; And by these Presents doe giue vnto you, or any fixe or more of you, whereof you, the said *Henrie*, Viscount *Maundeuille*, Lord *President* of Our priuie Counsell; *Fulke*, Lord *Brooke*; Sir *Iohn Suckling*, Sir *George Caluert*, Our principall Secretarie; and Sir *Iulius Caesar*, Master of the Rolls, Wee will alwaies to bee one, full power and authoritie from time to time, to take into your considerations and cares the Causes aforesaid, with these particular Articles following.

FIRST,

FIRST, what are the true causes, why Wools of this Our kingdome of England, are so much fallen from their wonted values, and to consider, what are the most probable meanes, to raise them againe to their former price and estimation.

SECONDLY, to aduise of the best meanes, how to preuent the transportation of Wools, Wooll-fels, Wollen-yarne, Fullerf-earth, Wood-ashes, of this Our kingdome of England, into Forraine parts, or into Our kingdome of Scotland, or Ireland, and how the offenders contrarie to Our Royall Proclamation, lately made in that behalfe may bee **D I S C O V E R E D** and punished.

How the Wools of Our Kingdome of *Ireland* not draped there for the necessarie vse of the Inhabitants of that Our Kingdome, or for merchandize, if they shall hereafter so imploy the same, may most commodiously bee transported and brought into this Realme of *England*, and here from time to time bee bought vp at reasonable and fit prices, and bee heere imployed.

How the Wools of Our Kingdome of *Scotland* not there draped, may also bee brought ~~into~~ *England* and here vsually sold and conuerted into the draperies of this Kingdome, That so all parts of Our Dominions may mutually bee helpfull one to another, and further each others common good.

AND least the drawing of so great quantities of Wools from all parts of Our Dominions, into this Our Realme of *England*, and the great quantities of Wools of the proper growth of this Realme, might bring so great a glut of Wools into this Realm, as that Our people shall not be able profitably to conuert the same into Cloth, and other manufactures, and so Our plentie of

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So Royall a Commoditie might vilifie the same, Wee would haue you to consider aduisedly, whither there will bee in truth any such excesse of quantitie, and if there bee, or by this meanes shall be, how the inconuenience which may grow thereby, may bee best preuented or auoyded.

THAT you take into your speciall care, how, and by what meanes the Wools of these Kingdomes and Dominions may be conuerted, and better imployed vnto the making of Cloth and Stuffles, and other manufactures to the best profit and aduantage, and the wayes and meanes how the Cloth and Stuffle made of Wooll, may bee well and trully made, dyed, and dressed, that so they may recouer that ancient estimation in forren parts, which by ill and deceitfull making, dying and dressing, they haue of late yeeres lost.

AND because there are now many Lawes in force concerning the making of Cloth, which for their number and contradiction, doe perplexe and intangle the makers of Cloth, and makes it hard to bee discerned, what the Law is in many particulars, We would haue you to collect and obserue those Lawes which are most conuenient and fit for the present times, to the end that those may be specially Commnaded to be obserued, and that such Lawes which are lesse fit for the times, may be spared from Execution, that they intangle not Our People, and this to bee obserued, vntill at a conuenient opportunitie, one cleere and fit Law may bee made in this Case, and all former Lawes which admits contradiction, or doubtfull interpretation may be repealed.

AND whereas there is yet no Statute Law made, directing the true making & dressing of the Stuffs, knowne
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by the names of the new Draperies, Our will and pleasure is, that vntill by Law they may likewise bee regulated, that yee conceiue and set downe some fit and conuenient Rules and Orders, whereby the true and substantiall making and dressing of them, may be enioyned to all the Makers and Workers therof, because it is found by experience, that the slight and deceitfull making of those Stuffs, hath brought them out of request, and exceedingly hindred their Sales in forraine parts, where they were in good estimation, and would haue increased much more, if the false making of them had not brought them into discredit.

AND that when good Rules and Orders shall bee conceiued and set downe, for the Making, Dying, and Dressing of Cloth and Stuffs made of Wooll, that you foresee also the best and most probable waies how those rules and orders may bee put into a due and constant execution, and that those which shall bee trusted therewith, be of such abilities and skill, as that they can, and of such integritie and honestie, as that they will diligently and faithfully performe that which shall bee committed in trust to them.

AND whereas the Broggers and Iobbers of Wools are in some places complained of, as meanes to raise the prices of Wooll, and to falsifie the same by vn honest mixtures by their interposing before it come to the hands of the Clothier and Weauer, who conuerteth the same, and in some other places, they are desired to bee continued, as necessarie Instruments to conuey Wools by smaller quantities to such Weauers or Clothiers as cannot conueniently furnish themselves immediately from the grower, so as they doe not falsifie their Wools

before they sell them againe, Wee would haue you to rake into your considerations, whether there bee any good vse at all to be made of those Iobbers or Broggers of Wooll, and if there be, then to consider in what places and vnder what conditions they are to be continued.

AND because the pices of dyed Clothes may bee much enhaunced by the deerenesse of the dyes, although the values of Wools bee not raised, Wee will you to enquire into the causes, how dying Stuffles become deerē, either vpon Patents of priuiledge, obtained vpon vntrue and vnfit suggestions for the sole importation of any sort or kind of dying Stuffle, or by engrossing of dying Stuffles into a few hands, whereby they become ouerdeare to the Dyer or Clothier, or by what other meanes or practice the dying Stuffles are any way endeared, and to foresee the best meanes you can, for remedie and preuention thereof.

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AND whereas a suspicion hath bin raised vpon the societies and companies, of the Merchant Aduenturers and other Merchants, and of some companies of handicraftsmen, that for their priuate gaine and particular aduantage, they make and put in execution diuers Ordinances amongst themselves, for ordering their trades and mysteries which tend to the hurt of the publike, We will and command you, and heereby give you power and authoritie vpon any complaint to bee made vnto you thereof, to enforme your selues of the Ordinances, Orders, and Constitutions of such Companies and Societies of Merchants, and others for the ordering of their Trade, to the end that if it shall appeare, that any thing therein contained, be vnfit to be continued, as tending to the generall hurt of others, either in making the Cloth

Cloth or other marchandise and wares of this Kingdom ouer-deare or otherwise, that the same may bee laid downe, and that no new Orders or Ordinances be hereafter made and executed by the said Companies, or any of them, before they be first perused and allowed of by Vs and Our Priuie Counsel, or so many of them as We shall thereunto specially appoint.

AND because it is conceiued by many, that by reason of the discouragements happened to Trade, the number of Merchants now applying themselues in course of Merchandize, are of too small a number to manage the same, and that if the number of Traders were enlarged, Trade it selfe would bee enlarged, which is now said by some to bee imprisoned, being for the most part confined to Companies and Societies of Merchants and others excluded, which are not members of those Companies, Wee will and require you to take into your considerations, whether it bee necessarie to giue way to a more open and free trade or not, and if it be, then in what manner it is fittest to be done, wherein We would alwayes haue you to take care, that gouernment and order in trade may bee preserued, and confusion auoided, and that to be done which may be best for Vs and Our people.

AND amongst other things which We conceiue to bee hindrances of a faire and free trade, We will and require you to consider, how farre it shall bee fit to admit of a ioynt stocke in Companies or Societies of Merchants.

AND also whether it be at all fit, to allow any Merchant to be also a Retayler, at least of those sorts of merchandize which himselfe returneth from beyond the Seas.

AND.

AND because the life of Commerce and Trade is money, whereof a greater scarcitie is now found in this Our Kingdome then hath bin in former times, We will and require you with all diligence and care, to take into your considerations, what are the principall causes and occasions thereof, and by what meanes Coyne and Bullion, may bee hereafter more plentifully brought into this Kingdome, and how the same may be here kept and preserved from exportation, vnlesse it be onely in Cases necessarie, and profitable for the State.

THAT to preuent an apparant consumption and confusion, which cannot otherwise be auoyded, ye diligently obserue the true ballance of the trade of this Kingdome, least the importation of Marchandize from forren parts, exceed the exportation of our owne natie Commodities, and consider of some fitting courses to reduce the same to more equalitie, and to thinke vpon the gaine or losse that comes to our Kingdome, by the course of exchange now vsed by our Merchants.

AND wee require you likewise to take into your considerations, the waies for the improuement of the natie Commodities of this Kingdome, to the best advantage.

AND the auoyding of vaine and vnprofitable returns of the Commodities of forren Kingdomes in superfluities, and the wastfull consumption thereof, which must needes exhaust the wealth and treasure of the Kingdome.

AND for the better increase of the wealth of the Kingdome, and the importation of Coyne and Bullion, from forren parts, where We haue traffique and Commerce, We would haue you consider what natie Commodities

modities of this Kingdome are of that necessarie vſefulneſſe to Our neighbour Nations, that they may fitly returne home a proportion of Coine or Bullion, for a ſupply of Treafure, and to aduiſe in what manner that may be beſt done.

AND becauſe the maintenance of Our Nauie, and the ſhipping of Our Kingdome is a principall meanes to aduance the Honor, Strength, Safetie, and Profit thereof, Wee will and require you chiefly and aboue other things, ſeriously and carefully to conſider by what good wayes and meanes, Our Nauie, and the Shipping of this Kingdome, may bee beſt maintayned and enlarged, and Mariners bred vp and encreaſed to furniſh the ſame, and to this end Wee require you to take into your beſt and moſt mature conſiderations and iudgements theſe things following, which Our ſelfe conceiue to bee very good meanes to attaine vnto that end Wee eſpecially ayme at, as aforeſaid.

FIRST and principally, that the Herring-fiſhing vpon the Seas and Coaſts, appertayning to Our owne Realmes and Dominions, may bee vndertaken by our people for the common good, for the encouragement whereof Wee ſhall bee alwaies readie to yeeld Our beſt aſſiſtance and protection, the worke it ſelfe being apparantly profitable for the Vnder-takers of the ſame, and the conſequences thereof for the good of Vs and Our people, being by Gods bleſſing ſuch and ſo many as no one atchieuement can equalize.

AND to the end that the ſhipping of other Nations may not bee imploied for the bringing in of forraine Commodities, whileſt Our owne ſhipping ſhall want imploiment, We will and require you to take into your

considerations, how Our Lawes doe now stand in force, for the prohibiting of merchandize to bee imported in forraine Bottomes, and to aduise what is fit to bee done therein.

AND further, to aduise if it be not behoofull to put in execution Our Lawes and Statutes established and continuing in force, which enioyne the Merchant strangers, aswell Denizens as not Denizens, to imploy and bestow the proceed of their merchandize imported hither on the native Commodities of this Realme, to bee exported by them, and by what meanes they may most fitly be done.

AND to the end Our Merchants may bee encouraged and enabled to export the Cloth of Our Kingdom, which they would doubtlesse performe more amply if they had better aduantages to make their returnes vpon, Wee would haue you to take into your consideration by what meanes to enlarge their returnes, and with what sorts of merchandize, which may bee most profitable for Our Kingdome, and to auoid those things by which they are now stopped and preuented.

AND because Our Merchants trading into the East-land Countries, were wont to make good returnes by Corne, which they haue neglected of late to their owne hurt, and hurt of the Kingdome, Wee would haue you to consider how to giue them encouragement in that Trade, and to doe it so as Our owne Dominions may be supplied in times of want, and yet in time of plentie, the Husbandrie and Tillage of this Realme not to bee discouraged.

FURTHER, whereas Our East-land Merchants in former times, did lade their ships with Hemp and Flax
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rough dressed in great quantities, which did not onely helpe them much in their returnes, but did also set great numbers of Our people on worke with dressing the same, and conuerting the same into Linnen Cloth, which kind of Trade, We vnderstand, is of late almost giuen ouer by bringing in of Hempe and Flax readie dressed, and that for the most part by Strangers, Wee commend vnto your care by what meanes this hurtfull error in Trade may be reformed to the helpe of Our Merchants, and the reliefe of Our poore Subiects.

AND BECAUSE the Companie of Merchants trading for the East Indies, haue beene much taxed by many for transporting the Coine and Treasure of this Realme to furnish their Trade withall, or that which would otherwise haue come in hither for the vse of Our Subiects, and that they doe not returne such merchandize from thence as doth recompence that losse vnto Our Kingdome, Wee will and command, and by these presents doe authorise you to enquire and search, whether that Companie doe iustly and truly performe their contract with Vs, concerning the carrying out of Money, and to consider by what meanes, that Trade which is specious in shew, may really and truly be made profitable to the publique, without exhausting the treasure of Our Kingdome.

AND because Wee vnderstand, that a great masse of Treasure is yeerely spent vpon Linnen Cloth, brought and bought from beyond the Seas at deare Rates, and for that it is conceiued if the Fishing so much desired by Vs, be thoroughly vnder-taken and Our shipping, encreased, it will require much greater proportion of Hempe for Cordage and other vses, in the craft or my-
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sterie of Fishing, which would set an infinite number of Our people on work, in preparing and making the same, We commend vnto your considerations the best wayes how the sowing of Hempe and Flax may bee encouraged and vnder-taken within this Kingdome, whereby so much good would redound vnto Vs and Our people.

AND for that it is very fit to commend the wearing of Cloth of Our Kingdomes to other Nations, by Our owne example at home, We would haue you to consider by what meanes the Cloth and Stuffles made of the Woolls of these Our Kingdomes, may bee more frequently worne by Our owne Subjects, to what sorts of people, to what purposes, and in what manner it were fit the wearing thereof were enioyed.

AND generally, Our will and command is, that with all care and diligence yee apply your selues to enforme Vs and Our priue Counsell from time to time, of these and all other things, which in your experiences or out of your iudgements yee finde or conceiue, may bee a meanes to aduance and quicken Trade, raise againe the natie Commodities of Our Kingdome, encourage Traders, Clothiers, and the Wooll-growers and Manufacturers, or to remooue the impediments or discouragements thereof; And to that purpose Wee hereby giue you power and authoritie, to send for such persons to attend you, and to haue view of all Records and Writings, as you shall finde needfull for your better information in any thing concerning this Our seruice.

IN WHICH your trauailes or in the execution of this Our Commission, if any Complaints shall bee presented or offered vnto you, which concerne the interest

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or particular grievance of any particular persons in points of Trades or Commerce, Wee will and require you to endeauour by all good meanes, so to mediate and perswade with the Parties, as that yee may set a finall end thereunto, if yee can, or if yee shall finde any wilfully stubborne or refractorie, that yee send both them and their Causes vnto Our Counsell board, there to bee further ordered; that such of Our Subiects as should intend their Trades, be not delayed or diuerted there-from, by vnnecessarie suits and vniust vexations.

AND Our pleasure and command is, that when and so soone as yee shall maturely haue considered and resolved vpon any materiall Parts or Points of these Our Instructions, that yee certifie the Body of Our priuie Counsell thereof from time to time, that by their aduices We may proceed to a present Reformation of the same, as occasion shal require, without the expectation of a totall and absolute reformation of euery part of these Our Instructions all at once, for that of necessitie must be the worke and labour of a long time, when timely redresse may happily be giuen to some, while others are in handling; And this Our Commission to stand and bee in force, vntill Our pleasure be signified vnder Our priuie Seale or great Seale, to determine and declare the same to be void. IN WITNES whereof Wee haue caused these Our Letters to be made Patents, *Witnesse* Our selfe at Westminster, the one and twentieth day of October, in the twentieth yeere of Our Raigne of England, France, and Ireland, and of Scotland the sixe and fiftieth.

EDMONDES.

Per breue de priuato sigillo.

Examinat. per IO. BEMBOWE.